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NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION, INC.

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March 23, 2011

Joint Committee on Judiciary
Legislative Office Building
Room 2500
Hartford, CT 06106

Position: **Oppose**

Re: HB 1094 – *An Act Banning Large Capacity Ammunition Magazines*

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary:

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (“NSSF”) is the non-profit trade association for America’s firearms, ammunition, hunting and recreational shooting sports industry. Our manufacturer members make the firearms used by law-abiding Connecticut sportsmen, the U.S. military and law enforcement agencies throughout Connecticut. This letter is to express our **opposition** to HB 1094. There is no rational basis upon which to justify the enactment of this proposed legislation.

The tragic incident that took place in Tucson, Arizona has unfortunately prompted a legislative “knee-jerk reaction” on both the state and federal levels even though support for gun control remains at an all-time low. Instead of focusing on the main problem, the actions of a mentally disturbed person, the focus has once again shifted to legislating law-abiding citizens who use firearms for legitimate purposes. The tragedy in Tucson is not about firearms, ammunition or magazines. It’s about the act of a mad man and gaining access to firearms.

The long-standing firearms industry is a proud part of Connecticut history yet continues to be targeted with legislation that infringes on their ability to do business. Many manufacturers in the state have been courted by firearm-friendly states and offered tax incentives and economic benefits to relocate. However, these companies have rebuked these offers in order to still be a part of the Connecticut business environment. How much longer can firearms manufacturers continue to be impacted by legislation before they say enough is enough? Marlin Firearms was founded in 1870 and employed over 300 employees right here in the state. Unfortunately, though they were forced to close their doors because of the overall business environment in Connecticut. What will legislators say when Colt Firearms and over 1,000 good-paying union jobs decides to pack up and leave the state?

The firearms industry has contributed close to \$1.3 billion in economic activity to Connecticut in 2010, employs more than 1,900 people in the state and generates an additional 3,500 jobs in supplier industries. In these difficult economic times, the firearms industry is still one of the few industries that has grown its profits while also contributing increased tax revenues to the state (to the tune of \$81 million). The firearms business is a highly regulated entity on both the state and federal level. It is unfortunate that precious time is focused on legislation which will do nothing to increase public safety and will only burden law-abiding businesses and gun owners.

PROMOTE

PROTECT

PRESERVE

One only needs to look as far back as the 1994 "Assault Weapons" Ban to find legislation which did little to increase public safety. One of the sections of this law was halting the production of "high capacity" magazines. This gun control strategy soon proved to be a failure. A comprehensive study by the Centers for Disease Control looked at the full panoply of gun control measures, including this proposed magazine ban, and concluded that none could be proven to reduce crime. Another study, commissioned by Congress, found that bans were not effective since "the banned weapons and magazines were never used in more than a modest fraction of all gun murders." These studies only demonstrate a ban that did not work or increase public safety.

The problem, of course, with such laws is that criminals routinely ignore them (after all, they are criminals). Law-abiding citizens who have every right to purchase and own firearms are the ones who are suffering by eliminating aspects of their activities with this type of law. Many law enforcement individuals are in agreement when questioned on the necessity of more gun control laws. Their sentiments focus on the fact that we currently have enough laws and that these laws just need to be strictly enforced. Acting Deputy Chief, Brian McCarthy of the Bridgeport Police Department said, **"Stricter enforcement. We've got the laws, we've got to enforce them. You put more laws in place, you only penalize the good people. Criminals are not going to be bothered by that."**

This legislation seeks to ban the mere possession of a "high capacity" magazine which is defined in the bill as greater than 10 rounds. Connecticut legislators have decided that anything over 10 rounds is too high and thus any law-abiding citizen in possession of a larger magazine is guilty of a felony. What exactly is the basis for the arbitrary standard of no more than 10 round magazines? Magazines come in many different capacities and serve many different purposes, such as home defense, collecting, and participation in the shooting sports. To ask the question whether one magazine is more legitimate than another is to miss the point concerning legal vs. irrational or criminal activity.

Connecticut, just like many other states, is facing very difficult budget times. Law enforcement organizations are feeling the pressure and would much rather focus their attention on proven crime fighting efforts as opposed to whether a law-abiding citizen possesses a magazine greater than 10 rounds. Will additional personnel be required for the enforcement and confiscation of the "high capacity" magazines?

We believe this type of proposed legislation will accomplish nothing. It will only impact legitimate citizens reducing their legal activities, promote a loss of revenue and jobs to the state, require more law enforcement, and further confuse the firearms owning public, who are already confused by the conflicting gun laws that currently exist which appear to affect only them. We suggest correction of current laws rather than implementing new "feel good" laws based upon irrational action and single events.

The National Shooting Sports Foundation opposes these proposals because they will only serve to increase the regulatory burden on law-abiding licensed firearms owners without benefiting public safety.

Sincerely,



Jake McGuigan

THE FIREARMS INDUSTRY CREATES JOBS IN CONNECTICUT

Connecticut companies that manufacture, distribute and sell sporting firearms, ammunition and supplies are an important part of the state's economy. Manufacturers of firearms, ammunition and supplies, along with the companies that sell and distribute these products, provide well paying jobs in Connecticut and pay significant amounts in tax to the state and Federal governments.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE SPORTING ARMS AND AMMUNITION INDUSTRY IN CONNECTICUT

	Direct	Supplier	Induced	Total
Jobs (FTE)	1,934	1,471	2,028	5,433
Wages	\$142,880,800	\$119,687,100	\$119,853,500	\$382,421,400
Economic Impact	\$565,264,200	\$371,891,600	\$350,248,800	\$1,287,404,600

THE FIREARMS & AMMUNITION INDUSTRY IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF CONNECTICUT'S ECONOMY

Companies in Connecticut that manufacture, distribute and sell firearms, ammunition and hunting equipment employ as many as 1,930 people in the state and generate an additional 3,499 jobs in supplier and ancillary industries. These include jobs in companies supplying goods and services to manufacturers, distributors and retailers, and those that depend on sales to workers in the firearms and ammunition industry. [1]

These are good jobs, paying an average of \$70,390 in wages and benefits. And today, every job is important. In fact, in Connecticut the unemployment rate has reached 9.8 percent. This means that there are already 185,100 people trying to find jobs in the state, and collecting unemployment benefits. [2]

THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF THE INDUSTRY SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE STATE

Not only does the manufacture and sale of firearms and hunting supplies create good jobs in Connecticut but the industry also contributes to the economy as a whole. In fact, in 2010 the firearms and ammunition industry was responsible for as much as \$1.3 billion in total economic activity in the state.

The broader economic impact flows throughout the economy, generating business for firms seemingly unrelated to firearms. Real people, with real jobs, working in industries as varied as banking, retail, accounting, metalworking, even in printing all depend on the firearms and ammunition industry for their livelihood.

THE STATE ALSO BENEFITS FROM THE TAXES PAID BY THE INDUSTRY

Not only does the firearms and ammunition industry create jobs, it also generates sizable tax revenues. In Connecticut, the industry and its employees pay over \$81.0 million in taxes including property, income and sales based levies. [3]

TAXES GENERATED IN CONNECTICUT

Tax Impact	Business Taxes	Excise Taxes
Federal Taxes	\$ 116,124,107	\$ 6,098,050
State Taxes	\$ 81,046,327	\$ -
Total Taxes	\$ 197,170,434	\$ 6,098,050

[1] John Dunham and Associates, New York, March 2010. Direct impacts include those jobs in firearms and ammunition manufacturers, as well as companies that manufacture products such as ammunition holders and magazines, cases, decoys, game calls, holsters, hunting equipment, scopes, clay pigeons and targets. Direct impacts also include those resulting from the wholesale distribution and retailing of firearms and ammunition in sporting goods retailers and variety/mass merchandise stores.

[2] The Bureau of Labor Statistics. Available on-line at: www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm. Data for 1/2010.

[3] This is in addition to over \$116.1 million in Federal business taxes and \$6.1 million in Federal excise taxes.

